

**FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MINUTES, JANUARY 6, 2004, TUESDAY**

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Co-Chairman Marc Wood. Those members in attendance included: Charlie Kimball, Peg Pinkham, School Board rep., Joe Delahunty, Rick Clark, Selectman, and Judy Peterson. Committee members not present were Thom Roy and Marilyn Baker. SAU Business Manager Toby Eaton, Superintendent Barbara Munsey, School Board members Marian Guidoboni and Joe Dreyer were also present to review the proposed School District budget for 2004-2005.

Superintendent Munsey first told the Budget Committee members that the School Board would return \$134,000 from Special Ed that was not planned on being expended due to costs being less than initially expected.

Joe Delahunty requested of the Board to get information regarding the percentage increase of the school budget over last year.

Business Manager Toby Eaton provided updated information from the School Board for the board approved budget. He provided pages to replace the preliminary budget pages. The preliminary budget request was for an increase of \$581,000 and the School Board reduced the requested increase to \$529,954 over last year's school budget. The major increases were in the Regular Education lines for Teachers' salaries. The increase reflects the addition of 2.4 teachers (grade 3 + 6 and a writing/language arts teacher) due to the increased numbers in enrollment. This line does not include any other changes because the contract negotiations are still taking place. The writing teacher purpose is to help improve areas in the Middle School grades concerning "No Child Left Behind". There was much discussion regarding this mandate that is required but not funded by the state or federal government. Because of "No Child Left Behind" the state is mandating the students meet proficiency guidelines in Math and Language Arts which is reflected in testing that is done in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Joe raised a question asking if there was a possibility of hiring 1.4 teachers instead of the 2.4 requested due to the other increases in the budget and the reduction of revenue. There was much discussion from the School Board members regarding the need for all of the teachers requested due to the oversight from last year of not hiring an additional 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at that time.

Superintendent Munsey pointed out that the expendable lines were all level funded showing no increase in request for them. Health Insurance for the teachers is a contractual item and can't be changed according to Superintendent Munsey.

The tuition line for Public High School is determined by the High School and was based on the present numbers of students. Special Education and High School Tuition are the major line items that affect the budget.

The line for Speech and Audiology is increased due to 2 new students that will be creating the demand for these services next year which is reflected in their IEPs. Physical and Occupational Therapy are services that are contracted out when required by IEPs.

The Line for Guidance is increased due to the replacement of the previous guidance counselor at a higher rate because of higher qualifications.

It was requested by the Budget Committee for the School Board to see if there are any other cuts that may be made to the budget to reduce the budget request. The current request is about a 9% increase over last year's budget. The School Board will review the budget again and get back to the Budget Committee before any vote is taken.

Warrant Article was presented with supporting information for an 8 room addition to the Middle School area at the proposed cost of \$1,496,000 with an additional \$442,000 needed for site work. The bond would be set up as a 10 year bond with the first year showing an increase of about \$ .28 then an additional \$1.00 the next year. The School Board will come back with more accurate numbers for the bond payment schedule.

Marc Wood will speak to a member of the Open Space Committee requesting the opportunity to speak to the Budget Committee regarding the petition Warrant Article for \$4,000,000 bond to purchase land or buy development rights in the Town to maintain Open Space and protect land from development. The next meeting will be to vote on the Town budget because the School Board won't have had a meeting before then to review the School Budget. There may be additional meetings scheduled if needed to vote on all budgets and Warrant articles before the Public Hearing which is on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

A motion was made by Joe and seconded by Charlie to adjourn at 9:20 p.m.

Judy Peterson, Secretary